

Learning English with CBC Calgary Weekly Newscast March 20, 2015

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Objectives of the weekly newscast lesson

- to develop listening skills at the CLB 4 level
- to increase vocabulary among learners
- to increase knowledge of news stories
- to provide a self-study tool, as well as, an ESL classroom resource



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<http://www.cbc.ca/calgary/learning-english/>

News story #1 Inappropriate Nursing

What is the job of a nurse? How close do nurses get to their patients? This first story is about a nurse who got far too close to a child patient and acted badly.

Vocabulary

Before you listen to the first news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily. Use one of the vocabulary words below to complete the sentences. *Answers are in the appendix.*

Word	Definition
sexually assaulted	Touched in a sexual way without giving permission to be touched that way
charge	To state officially that someone has committed a crime
interfere	The act of getting involved in a way that is unwanted or unneeded
testify	To make a statement of what is true in the court of law
remote	Secluded; not near others; far away from other people
inappropriately	Not right for a particular situation
comment	An opinion that you express about someone or something

1. If you do something illegal and get caught, you will be_____.
2. Most jails that hold criminals are in _____ areas.
3. If you know of anyone who has been_____, you should urge him or her to go to the police to report it. This means that someone else touched him or her _____.
4. People have to _____ in court all the time about things they have seen or heard.
5. Your _____ are great! I like what you're saying. Keep them coming.
6. We can't be interrupted here, so please do not _____.

Now listen to the first news story from the audio file.

Listening activity: Past or Present Listen to the news story and mark which events happened in the past and which events are happening now.

Past or Present	Now	3 years ago
1. A Calgary court hears from a 16-year- old boy.		
2. The boy is sexually assaulted by a nurse at the Children's hospital.		
3. The nurse is charged with sexual interference.		
4. The boy testifies from a remote courtroom.		
5. Legary touches him inappropriately while treating him.		
6. Legary makes sexual comments while treating him.		
7. The boy seeks justice.		

Discussion Questions: Are you surprised to hear a story like this? Why or why not? What should the punishment be for the nurse? How can we protect children from situations like this?

News story #2 Diplomas: A Lighter Weighting

Do you know what high school diplomas are? What is the most important test that you've ever written? This second story is about the change that is coming for students writing grade 12 exams.

Vocabulary

Before you listen to the second news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily. Match the words in the story with the synonyms. *Answers are in the appendix.*

Answer	Words in the story	Synonyms (Related words)
	to influence	a) to accomplish to reach a goal
	an impact	b) achievement finishing
	post-secondary education	c) distribution load
	to achieve	d) effect a change
	completion	e) main central
	core	f) college; university trade school
	weight	g) to control to pressure

Extra definitions to help you understand the reading:

high school diploma exams – final exams written by students who are in grade 12

Now listen to the second news story from the audio file.

Listening Activity: Short Answer

Answer the questions below as you listen to the audio. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. What will have less of an influence over students' final grades?
2. How much are diplomas currently worth?
3. When will this change (of making the tests worth less) take place?
4. Why is this so important for students? (2 reasons)
5. Name 2 examples of the core courses.
6. When will the first round of the diplomas with a new weight be written?

Discussion Questions: Do you think it is fair to have an exam be worth 50% of someone's grade? What will change for students if the diplomas are only worth 30%? How will this change affect the work they do at other times during the year? What would you prefer: 30% or 50% weighting of the diploma exam?

News story #3 Limited Parking for Car2go Users

Have you ever used a car share service? What are the benefits of sharing a car? Do you know what Car2go is? This next story is about some limits the city of Calgary is putting on Car2go users.

Vocabulary

Before you listen to the third news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily. Match the words with the correct definitions. *Answers are in the appendix.*

Answer	Words or phrases	Definition
	popular	a) cars, trucks, motorcycles – machines that drive on the roads
	concerned	b) roads with parking meters on them
	vehicles	c) people who live in a local neighbourhood or area
	metered streets	d) lots of people like it
	elected officials	e) people who were chosen to be in the government by citizens
	residents	f) worried about something

Extra definitions to help you understand the reading:

Car2go – a car sharing service in which more than one person shares the same car and uses it when he or she needs to

Now listen to the third news story from the audio file.

Listening Activity: True/False

Decide whether the statements below are **true (T)** or **false (F)**. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. ____ Car2go service is excited about these proposed changes for where they can park.
2. ____ If these changes go through, only a limited number of Car2go cars could park in front of parking meters on certain streets.
3. ____ One good thing Car2go says is users can get more exercise by walking further.
4. ____ Parking will become harder for Car2go users.
5. ____ Downtown will pose a big problem for Car2go users because the parking will be difficult.
6. ____ Car2go wants regular Calgarians to try to change the officials' minds about this decision.
7. ____ As many as 18,000 residents use Car2go.

Discussion Questions: Why do you think city officials are suggesting that Car2go users have a limited amount of spots in the downtown area? What seems to be the problem here? Can you think of any solutions that would work?

Language Focus: Comparatives and Superlatives

We use comparatives and superlatives to compare two or more nouns.

Comparatives are used to compare only two things. If you want to compare three or more nouns (compare 1 to a whole group) you must use the superlative.

The formation of a comparative and superlative is as follows:

Adjectives	Comparative -er	Superlative the _____-est
Small	smaller	the smallest
Great	greater	the greatest
Warm	warmer	the warmest

We use the words more and the most, instead of the –er and –est endings when the adjective is more than one syllable long.

Adjectives	Comparative - er	Superlative - est
beautiful	more beautiful	the most beautiful
Excited	more excited	the most excited
Nervous	more nervous	the most nervous

All comparatives are followed by “than”. See below for examples:

Strawberries are smaller than apples.

Mexico is warmer than Canada.

I am more excited than my brother is.

Roses are more beautiful than tulips.

All superlatives will have the article “the” before them. See below for examples:

Jane is the smallest person in the room.

August is the warmest month.

Roses are the most beautiful flower.

I am the most nervous person out of all of my friends.

1. As it was said in the beginning of this lesson, comparatives and superlatives are used to compare two or more nouns. Go through the examples above and identify the nouns being compared.

2. Then, go to the two examples taken from this week’s news stories below and identify if it is a superlative or comparative and which nouns are being compared. Be careful: one of the answers below is an irregular comparative, can you tell which one? *Answers are in the appendix.*

- a. Car2go says the changes would force users to walk much further to find a vehicle and make parking more difficult.
- b. Trevor Schober says it's a terrible idea because it will be a lot harder to park car2go cars downtown.

Transcripts of Weekly news stories

	MARCH 20 TH WEEKLY NEWS STORIES	TIME
Introduction	Hi, this is Rosa Marchitelli . You're listening to Learning English with CBC for the week of March 20 th .	0:00
Story 1	A Calgary court today heard from a 16-year-old boy who says he was sexually assaulted by a nurse at the Children's hospital three years ago. The nurse is 46-year old Drew Legary who is also charged with sexual interference. The boy testified from a remote courtroom and says Legary touched him inappropriately and made sexual comments while treating him in September of 2011.	0:08
Story 2	High school diploma exams will soon have less influence over a student's final grades. Right now final exams make up half a Grade 12 student's mark. Starting in the fall, Education Minister Gordon Dirks says diploma exams will be worth 30 per cent of the final grade. Dirks said, "This is an important matter for students. A student's final mark may impact their being accepted into post-secondary education. And their final mark may impact whether they achieve high school completion." Students write diploma exams for Grade 12 core courses; language arts, social studies, math and science. The first round of diploma exams to be written with the new weighting of marks will take place in November of this year.	0:39
Story 3	The popular car2go car sharing service is concerned about changes proposed by the City of Calgary that would limit the number of its vehicles allowed to park along metered streets. Car2go says the changes would force users to walk much further to find a vehicle and make parking more difficult. Car2go user Trevor Schober says it's a terrible idea because it will be a lot harder to park car2go cars downtown. The company is urging Calgarians to express their support for car2go with elected officials on the City's Transportation and Transit Committee. It says as many as 80 thousand residents use car2go.	1:30

Answer keys

News story 1

Vocabulary:

1. If you do something illegal and get caught, you will be **charged**.
2. Most jails that hold criminals are in **remote** areas.
3. If you know of anyone who has been **sexually assaulted**, you should urge him or her to go to the police to report it. This means that someone else touched him or her **inappropriately**.
4. People have to **testify** in court all the time about things they have seen or heard.
5. Your **comments** are great! I like what you're saying. Keep them coming.
6. We can't be interrupted here, so please do not **interfer**.

Listening:

Past or Present	Now	3 years ago
1. A Calgary court hears from a 16-year- old boy.	x	
2. The boy is sexually assaulted by a nurse at the Children's hospital.		x
3. The nurse is charged with sexual interference.	x	
4. The boy testifies from a remote courtroom.	x	
5. Legary touches him inappropriately while treating him.		x
6. Legary makes sexual comments while treating him.		x
7. The boy seeks justice.	x	

News story 2

Vocabulary:

Answer	Words in the story	Synonyms (Related words)
g	Influence	a) accomplish; to reach a goal
d	Impact	b) achievement; finishing
f	Post-secondary education	c) distribution; load
a	achieve	d) effect; change
b	completion	e) main; central
e	core	f) college; university; trade school
c	weight	g) to control; to pressure

Listening:

1. What will have less of an influence over students' final grades? **High school diplomas**
2. How much are diplomas currently worth? **50% of a student's grades**
3. When will this change of making the tests worth less take place? **Starting in the fall**

4. Why is this so important for students? (2 reasons) **Because their final mark may impact whether they can complete high school, or what post-secondary institute they will get accepted into**
5. Name 2 examples of the core courses. (any 2 of these possible answers is good) **social studies, math, language arts, science**
6. When will the first round of diplomas be written? **November of this year (2015)**

News story 3

Vocabulary:

Answer	Words or phrases	Definition
d	popular	a) cars, trucks, motorcycles – machines that drive on the roads
f	concerned	b) roads with parking meters on them
a	vehicles	c) people who live in a local neighbourhood or area
b	metered streets	d) lots of people like it
e	elected officials	e) people who were chosen to be in the government by citizens
c	residents	f) worried about something

Listening:

1. **F** Car2go service is excited about these proposed changes for where they can park.
2. **T** If these changes go through, only a limited number of Car2go cars could park in front of parking meters on certain streets.
3. **F** One good thing Car2go says is users can get more exercise by walking further.
4. **T** Parking will become harder for Car2go users.
5. **T** Downtown will pose a big problem for Car2go users because the parking will be difficult.
6. **T** Car2go wants regular Calgarians to try to change the officials' minds about this decision.
7. **F** As many as 18,000 residents use Car2go.

Language focus:

All comparatives are followed by “than”. See below for examples:

Strawberries are smaller than **apples**.

Mexico is warmer than **Canada**.

I am more excited than **my brother** is.

Roses are more beautiful than **tulips**.

All superlatives will have the article “the” before them. See below for examples:

Jane is the smallest person in the room. (Jane is being compared to everyone else in the room)

August is the warmest month. (August is being compared to all the other months in the year)

Roses are the most beautiful flower. (Roses are being compared with all other flowers)

I am the most nervous person out of all of my friends. (I am being compared to all of my friends)

- a. Car2go says the changes would force users to walk much further (irregular) to find a vehicle and make parking more difficult. (people will have to walk further and parking will be more difficult than it would have been before these changes are made)
- b. Trevor Schober says it's a terrible idea because it will be a lot harder to park car2go cars downtown. (it will be harder to park the car if the law passes, then if things stay the same)